

**PROTECTION AND SAFETY
ADMINISTRATIVE MEMO #3-5-12-05**

To: Protection and Safety Administrators, Supervisors, and Workers
Resource Development Administrators, Supervisors, and Workers

From: Todd Reckling, Administrator
Office of Protection and Safety

RE: Use of Child and Provider Characteristics on N-FOCUS

Child Characteristics: As of June 1, 2005, workers must complete the Child Characteristics Section on N-FOCUS for all children who become wards of HHS or HHS-OJS, including those whose wardship is based on a voluntary placement agreement. It is not necessary to complete this information for:

- Youth whose custody is placed with HHS solely for purposes of the OJS evaluation (unless or until the court orders the youth into HHS-OJS custody);
- Children who are placed with HHS under law enforcement hold and returned home within 48 hours.

For children who previously became HHS or HHS-OJS wards and remain in HHS custody, the Child Characteristics must be completed at the time of the next court review, or by December 31, 2005, whichever comes first. Once the Section is completed, workers must review the Characteristics Section and make appropriate changes at least every six months.

Provider Characteristics: As of June 1, 2005, workers must complete the Provider Characteristics Section on N-FOCUS for all new providers of out of home care, including traditional and agency-based foster parents and facilities. (It is not necessary to complete this information for foster parents who are approved as relatives or persons previously known to the child, unless or until the foster parent becomes licensed.) For already-existing providers, this information must be completed prior to December 31, 2005. Once the Section is completed, workers must review the Characteristics Section and make appropriate changes every two years, or more frequently if circumstances warrant a change.

These requirements are being put into place for three purposes:

1. Matching of children with potential placement providers; and
2. Data gathering regarding children and providers;
3. In the near future, a new "child disclosure" form will be added to N-FOCUS. Completion of this form will require prior completion of the Child Characteristics Section on N-FOCUS.

If you have questions about how to enter the required information, please contact Joe Skorupa (402-471-7987 or Lori Koenig (402-471-9456). If you have questions about the requirement, please contact Margaret Bitz (402)-471-9457).